

Message Text

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R 071540Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6202

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2052

LIMDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS AMB KEATING

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, XF, EG

SUBJECT: CODEL MCGOVERN DISCUSSIONS WITH ISRAELI LEADERS
ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT

1. SUMMARY: DURING VISIT TO ISRAEL APRIL 2-7, SENATOR MCGOVERN HAD OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW WITH TOP ISRAELI LEADERS RECENT BREAK-DOWN IN NEGOTIATIONS AND POSSIBLE FUTURE OF DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS IN REGION. MAIN POINTS MADE BY PRIME MINISTER RABIN, DEFENSE MINISTER PERES, AND FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON WERE:

(1) RESPONSIBILITY FOR INABILITY OF EGYPT AND ISRAEL TO REACH SECOND-STAGE AGREEMENT SHOULD PROPERLY LIE WITH EGYPT;

(2) STRATEGY BEING FOLLOWED BY SADAT IS TO DRIVE WEDGE BETWEEN U.S. AND ISRAEL;

(3) APPROPRIATE ISRAELI RESPONSE TO SUCH STRATEGY IS TO CONVINCE EGYPT THAT IT CANNOT GAIN THROUGH AMERICAN PRESSURE
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ON ISRAEL WHAT CANNOT OTHERWISE BE GAINED; AND

(4) ISRAEL HAS LITTLE EXPECTATION THAT RESUMED GENEVA CONFERENCE WILL RESULT IN PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE, BUT IS NOT AFRAID TO ATTEND. END SUMMARY.

2. CODEL HAD MOST DETAILED SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION DURING LENGTHY LUNCHEON MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON, IN MAKING POINT THAT ISRAEL DID EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS OF RECENT NEGOTIATIONS, ALLON INFORMED MCGOVERN THAT ISRAEL OFFERED TO EVACUATE ABURODEIS OIL FIELDS, TO ALLOW EGYPTIAN CONVOYS TO ENTER ABU RODEI WITH UN INSPECTION, RATHER THAN ISRAELI; TO WITHDRAW FURTHER TO EAST IN AREA NORTH OF THE PASSES; AND TO ALLOW EGYPT TO INSTALL ELECTRONIC EARLY WARNING SYSTEM INSIDE ZONE REMAINING UNDER ISRAELI CONTROL. IN RETURN FOR THESE CONCESSIONS, ISRAEL WAS WILLING TO ACCEPT EGYPTIAN COMMITMENT TO REFRAIN FROM USE OF FORCE UNTIL CURRENT AGREEMENT SUPERCEDED BY NEW ONE. EGYPTIANS, HOWEVER, " WOULD NOT EVEN CONSIDER THESE PROPOSALS." (WITHIN HOURS OF EACH OTHER, BOTH ALLON AND CHIEF-OF-STAFF GUR TOOK CREDIT FOR ORIGINATING CONCEPT OF MUTUALLY-REINFORCING EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS IN SINAI).

3. REGARDING NEXT STEPS, ALLON TOLD MCGOVERN HE SAW THREE OPTIONS: (1) FINAL PEACE TREATY WITH EGYPT, NEGOTIATED EITHER AT GENEVA OR ELSEWHERE; (2) ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO A LINE SUBSTANTIALLY FURTHER EAST OF THE PASSES IN RETURN FOR EGYPTIAN DECLARATION OF NON-BELLIGERENCY; AND (3) RESUMPTION OF TALKS WHERE THEY WERE WHEN SUSPENDED. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, ALLON SAID HE SAW NO REASON WHY OPTION #3 COULD NOT EVOLVE INTO OPTION #2. HE ALSO MADE CLEAR THAT OPTION #3 DID NOT NECESSARILY REQUIRE RESUMPTION OF "SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY."

4. ALLON STRESSED THAT STATUS QUO COULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE FOR LONG, AND SAID HE " WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED" IF A NEW POLITICAL INITIATIVE WERE TAKEN IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WHEN ASKED WHO HE EXPECTED TO TAKE THAT INITIATIVE, ALLON REPLIED IT COULD BE EGYPT, ISRAEL OR THE U.S. HE ADDED THAT HE DID NOT CONSIDER SADAT'S SPEECH OF MARCH 29 AS THE KIND OF POLITICAL INITIATIVE HE HAD IN MIND, SINCE EVERYTHING OFFERED IN THAT SPEECH WHICH ATTRACTED SO MUCH ATTENTION

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IN WESTERN PRESS COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED BY ISRAEL IN ANY CASE ON THE BASIS OF PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS OR UNDERSTANDINGS.

5. REMARKING THAT OVERALL EGYPTIAN STRATEGY SEEMS TO BE TO DRIVE WEDGE BETWEEN US AND ISRAEL, ALLON INFORMED MCGOVERN (SOMEWHAT EMOTIONALLY) THAT ONLY WHEN SADAT REALIZES THAT ISRAEL WILL NOT ACCEDE TO AMERICAN PRESSURE WILL HE BE WILLING TO MAKE CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS. ALLON SAID THAT

ISRAEL, IF LEFT ALONE, CAN BE STILL MORE FORTHCOMING IN NEGOTIATIONS. IT WILL NO, HOWEVER, MAKE CONCESSIONS UNDER PRESSURE. " IF WE HAVE TO EAT ONCE A DAY, WE WILL EAT ONCE A DAY."

6. DEFENSE MINISTER PERES ALSO STRESSED TO CODEL THAT GOI HAD MADE SUBSTANTIAL CONCESSIONS DURING RECENT NEGOTIATIONS, BUT THAT EGYPT SEEMED UNWILLING TO MEET ISRAEL HALF WAY. PERES SAID THAT ISRAEL ENTERED NEGOTIATIONS SEEKING PRIMARILY TO ACHIEVE THREE THINGS:(1) AN AGREEMENT OF SUFFICIENT DURATION THAT ISRAEL WOULD NOT BE FORCED TO MOVE ITS NEW DEFENSIVE LINE SOON AFTER ESTABLISHING ITS(2) EGYPTIAN CONCESSIONS WITH SUFFICIENT POLITICAL CONTENT THAT THEY WOULD SERVE AS PUBLIC INDICATION OF EGYPTIAN WILLINGNESS TO EMBARK ON NEW ERA IN RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL; AND(3) DEMILITARIZATION OF ANY ADDITIONAL TERRITORY EVACUATED BY IDF. PERES SAID THAT DUE TO SADAT'S REFUSAL EVEN TO CONSIDER NON-BELLIGERENCY, ISRAEL FELT UNABLE TO WITHDRAW TO EXTENT IT OTHERWISE MIGHT HAVE. EVEN SO, ISRAEL OFFERED TO WITHDRAW FROM OIL FIELDS AND FROM HALF OF PASSES.

7. ACCORDING TO PERES, MAIN STICKING POINT WAS DURATION OF AGREEMENT. EGYPTIANS REJECTED CONCEPT OF AUTOMATIC EXTENSION OF UN MANDATE, AND INSISTED INSTEAD THAT SECURITY COUNCIL IN EFFECT HAVE ANNUAL VETO OVER CONTINUATION OF UN PRESENCE. FROM PURELY PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW, ISRAEL DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO CONFRONT POSSIBILITY OF HAVING TO ERECT NEW DEFENSIVE LINE EVERY ONE OR TWO YEARS. WHEN ASKED IF HE COULD ACCEPT AGREEMENT REFLECTING POSITIONS AS THEY STOOD AT TIME TALKS WERE SUSPENDED, WITH THE ADDITION OF A FIVE-YEAR GUARANTEED LIFE FOR UN FORCES IN SINAI, PERES REPLIED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.

8. IN COLDE DISCUSSION WITH PRIME MINISTER RABIN, RABIN
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SEEMED MORE RELUCTANT THAN EITHER ALLON OR PERES TO DISCUSS RECENT NEGOTIATIONS IN DETAIL OR TO SPECULATE AT ANY LENGTH ON NEXT STEPS. SUBSTANCE OF RABIN'S COMMENTS DID NOT GO FAR BEYOND POINTS HE MADE IN RADIO INTERVIEW PREVIOUS EVENING TEL AVIV 1961.)

9. RABIN EXPRESSED READINESS TO GO TO GENEVA BUT EMPHASIZED THAT, IF NOT WELL PREPARED IN ADVANCE, IT WOULD ACCOMPLISH NO MORE THAN ANY OTHER MULTILATERAL CONFERENCE, WHICH TO RABIN MEANS NIL. PRIME MINISTER MADE POINT THAT ONLY AGREEMENTS REACHED BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL SINCE 1948 WERE ACHIEVED IN CONTEXT OF AT LEAST INDIRECT NEGOTIATIONS, I.E., ARMISTICE AGREEMENT CONCLUDED AT RHODES IN 1949 AND KILOMETER 101 TALKS FOLLOWING OCTOBER WAR.

10. RABIN ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT HE CAN SEE NO PURPOSE TO
BE SERVED BY FURTHER RECOURSE TO WAR. HE SAID THAT REALISTICALLY
EVEN IF ISRAEL WERETO WIN MILITARILY, THERE IS NO WAY IT
CAN WIN POLITICALLY. RABIN STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT ISRAEL
IS NEVERTHELESS READY FOR WAR SHOLD IT BE UNAVOIDABLE.
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